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Ms. Hogan, USAID Mission Director/A launches the multi-media kit for the interactive Technology Tools for Teaching and Training (T4) program.



USAID Mission Director/A Visits Another Successful T4 Education Program

Elizabeth A. Hogan, USAID Mission Director/A, was in Bangalore last week for the launch of new multi-media products produced under the USAID Technology Tools for Teaching and Training (T4) program.

The successful T4 program utilizes high-quality, interactive radio, video, and computer programs that simplify the teaching of difficult concepts in various subjects, including language, math, science and social studies – thus enhancing children's learning experience.

One of the products launched at the event was a multi-media kit with lessons for middle school students. This product allows

teachers to conduct classes at their own pace, an advantage over broadcast or telecast modes, where the teachers and students had to keep pace with standard lessons broadcast over a radio. This is the first time this new product has been piloted anywhere in the world.

"Fun with Geometry," the other product launched during the visit, is a Group Teaching and Learning (GTL) computer software to facilitate the teaching and learning of topics such as angles, triangles, and circles for middle school grades.

Observing the classroom full of bright-eyed and engaged children who were eager to show what they had learned

through the T4 program, Ms. Hogan said, "I've been very impressed with the work that is going on under T4, not just in Karnataka, but in several states in India. Starting with a modest effort in a thousand schools in 2004, the program today reaches more than 24 million children in 250,000 schools across six states, with close to 600 technology based programs to its credit! It is really rewarding to know that there has been a significant positive change in the learning by students after T4 interventions have been introduced in schools. But what has been most heart-warming wherever I've been, is the sheer joy I see on the faces of students when they participate in T4 programs".

Gujarat Artisans Find Employment and Equality Through Women's Self Help Group



Photo: USAID/Katherine Kaestner

U.S. Chargé d' Affairs, Ambassador Peter Burleigh and USAID Mission Director/A, Elizabeth A. Hogan, recently visited Hansiba, the retail outlet for Self Employed Women Associations (SEWA) and saw first hand a thriving commercial enterprise that is owned and managed by talented women artisans whose work provides long-term livelihood, stability, and equality to thousands of women. Ambassador Burleigh also launched a contemporary women's apparel line.

SEWA, a 36 year-old Indian Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) headquartered in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, is a member-based organization whose main goal is to bring women working in the informal sector into the formal economy so that they can obtain full employment and self-reliance. SEWA has more than 750,000 members across India and more than 530,000 members in the state of Gujarat alone. The SEWA Trade Facilitation Centre (STFC) was established by more than 15,000 women textile and handicrafts

artisans in May 2003 as the commercial arm of SEWA. By building a grassroots business enterprise of artisans, STFC set out to ensure that craftswomen in the informal sector have full employment and economic security. STFC achieves this by sustained, profitable, and efficient coordination of the design, production, and marketing of their products and services in mainstream national and global markets. Currently STFC has 3,500 artisan shareholders in 80 villages across three districts in Gujarat. The Hansiba brand, launched by SFTC, includes hand-embroidered and hand-crafted apparel and home furnishing sold at retail outlets in Delhi, Mumbai, and Ahmedabad. The artisans are the shareholders, suppliers, and managers of the company. Sixty-five percent of all sales go directly to the artisans.

From 2003 to 2008, USAID worked in the cities of Ahmedabad, Surat, and Vadodara, Gujarat, in partnership with SEWA, city authorities, and slum communities to improve municipal

services, primary community health service, and education. Microfinance services to develop regular savings, loans for income generating activities, shelter improvement, and insurance were also provided. With \$3 million in funding from USAID, the project was able to leverage over \$8 million from partners.

USAID works with a strong belief that improving women's equality and empowerment is necessary for successful development. When women have opportunities that permit them to be self-reliant, they tend to have greater control over finances and decisions in their homes and in their communities. Evidence suggests that increasing the role of women in household decision making changes the allocation of household expenditures, resulting in a larger share of resources devoted to children's education and health, which in turn leads to healthier communities and better societal indicators. ■

Mass polio immunization campaigns, like the one Chargé d' Affairs, Ambassador Peter Burleigh attended last month in New Delhi, are helping to eradicate polio in India



Photo: WHO/ NPSP



Photo: Anita Khemka

Working With the Government of India to Eradicate Polio

Last month U.S. Chargé d' Affairs, Ambassador Peter Burleigh, visited the Srinivasapuri Health Center in New Delhi to participate in a polio immunization day, highlighting the U.S. Government's firm and longstanding commitment, working in partnership with the Government of India and other organizations, to eradicate polio in India.

A highly infectious disease that mainly affects children under five, polio invades the nervous system and can cause total paralysis or life-long crippling disability. Polio was once one of the most feared of all childhood diseases, but has all but disappeared from most of the world. However, it remains endemic in four countries; India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nigeria.

While substantial challenges still exist, particularly in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, India has made remarkable progress toward polio eradication, implementing immunization and surveillance activities at a scale, intensity, and

quality that have exceeded those in any other country.

Twice a year, on National Immunization Day (NID), nearly 172 million children are immunized. To reach people on the move, mobile and transit vaccination teams immunize children at places such as railway stations, inside running trains, at bus stands, market areas, brick kilns and construction sites. In addition, intense immunization rounds occur almost every month in the endemic states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and in areas at risk for polio, such as Delhi and Mumbai.

As a result, the number of polio cases in the country has declined by 99 per cent since the launch of the National Polio Surveillance Project (NPSP) in 1997. Compared with an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 cases per year before the launch of the eradication initiative, polio cases have been reduced to a few hundred every year during the past few years. In the last two years, the number of polio cases declined from 874 in 2007 to 559 in

2008; only 59 cases have been reported so far in 2009, compared to 251 cases reported in the same period last year.

Polio eradication has long been a global priority for the U.S. Government, with polio eradication activities in India provided through USAID and the Department of Health and Human Service (HHS). Since 1996, USAID has provided a total of \$65 million for polio eradication efforts, with the current program funded at \$6 million annually. USAID supports surveillance and social mobilization activities through WHO, UNICEF, and the CORE Group of non-governmental organizations.

Since 1999, HHS has provided more than \$112 million to support polio virus surveillance, human resources and program operations, and UNICEF for the purchase of oral polio vaccine (OPV) for vaccination campaigns and for the operational costs of social mobilization. ■